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INFLUENCES FROM J. P. JACOBSEN AND SIG- BJÖRN OBSTFELDER ON RAINER MARIA RILKE'S "DIE AUFZEICHNUNGEN DES MALTE LAURIDS BRIGGE"

BORGE GEDSO MADSEN

University of Minnesota

I

RILKE'S admiration for J. P. Jacobsen was very sincere and seems to have lasted about twenty years. The enthusiastic references to Jacobsen in the Rilke letters are so numerous that it would be impossible, indeed unnecessary, to enumerate them all here—however, a couple of the more important ones may be quoted. In a letter to Ellen Key, dated April 2, 1904, Rilke writes:

Ich habe Jacobsen zuerst 1896/1897 in München gelesen; ich war damals sehr unreif und las, mehr ahnungsvoll als schauend, erst Niels Lyhne, später Maria Grubbe. Seither sind diese Bücher, zu denen 1898 noch die "sechs Novellen" und die Briefe kamen, in allen meinen Entwicklungen wirksam gewesen, und noch heute geht es mir mit ihnen so, dass ich, wo ich gerade stehe, immer, jedes Mal, wenn ich weiter will, das Nächste, das Nächsthöhere, die kommende Stufe meines Werdens in ihnen vorgezeichnet und schon geschaffen finde. In diesen Büchern ist vieles von dem, wonach die Besten heute noch suchen, schon gefunden, wenigstens aus einem Leben heraus gefunden.

To Hermann Pongs Rilke writes (August 17, 1924): "Noch weit in die Pariser Zeit hinein, war er [Jacobsen] mir ein Begleiter im Geiste und eine Gegenwart im Gemüt." And finally, as late as 1916, Rilke could write to Countess Aline Dietrichstein (*Briefe 1914-1921*, p. 100): "... die fast zwanzig Jahre alte Bewunderung für Jacobsen ... dass diese alte Bewunderung jung geblieben ist und mich jung erhalten hat." In 1925, as we shall see, Rilke had moved away from Jacobsen to some extent. In his conversations in Paris with Maurice Betz he has some

interesting comments on "die zwei Jacobsen" which I shall presently have occasion to discuss.

Although *Malte* is a very original book, there is no doubt that powerful Jacobsen reminiscences can be found in it. Even a very cursory reader could not help noticing the many references to Danish history and literature, and speculating on the origin of Rilke's interest in these matters. In *Malte* mention is made of the following Danish historical personalities: King Christian the Fourth; the two noblewomen, Ellen Marsvin and Christine Munk; Admiral Niels Juel; Leonore Christine, a daughter of Chr. IV. Certain Danish authors also receive mention, in passing; e.g., Baggesen, Oehlenschläger, and Schack-Staffeldt. More important than these is the direct reference to the rather obscure figure of Ulrik Christian Gyldenløve, whom Rilke, one may assert almost with certainty, could have known only through Jacobsen's novel *Marie Grubbe* (with its famous description of Ulrik Christian's death).

These Jacobsen reminiscences, however, are all of a rather superficial nature and of little thematic interest. But even more important structural elements in *Malte* can be proved to derive from Jacobsen, although they receive a characteristic Rilkean interpretation. Werner Kohlschmidt, in his fine essay on "Rilke und Jacobsen" included in his *Rilke Interpretationen* (1948), lists what he calls the "Motivgemeinschaften" between the two writers: "... das Motiv des eigenen Todes, der Kindheit, der jungen Mädchen, des Sich-Fallen-Lassens" (p. 36).

It is undoubtedly true that in both *Malte* and *Niels Lyhne* much space is devoted to lingering descriptions of imaginative childhood; that both Jacobsen and Rilke delight in portraying young sensitive girls (Rilke: Abelone; Jacobsen: Marie Grubbe, Fennimore, Gerda); and that the motif of "die fallende Kurve" is found not only in both *Niels Lyhne* and *Marie Grubbe*, but also in *Malte*. It is possible that Rilke may have been guided to these themes by his early Jacobsen reading. But far more important is the first "Motivgemeinschaft" of "des eigenen Todes" because this is demonstrably taken by Rilke from Jacobsen's *Marie Grubbe*. In the Danish novel Marie Grubbe says to Holberg in the course of their conversation on life and religion:

"Jeg tror, hvert Menneske lever sit eget Liv og dör sin egen Död, det tror jeg" (p. 306). The German translation in which Rilke found this passage reads: "Ich glaube, jeder Mensch lebet sein eigenes Leben und stirbt seinen eigenen Tod, das glaube ich."

These words are not in themselves profound, but they may become powerful, depending on the degree of emotional intensity with which they are invested. They stress, in both writers, the loneliness and isolation of the individual in life and especially in death. The characters in Jacobsen's novels who die typical "eigene Tode" are: Marie Grubbe, Edele Lyhne, Erik Refstrup, and Niels Lyhne. Ulrik Christian Gyldenløve, on his deathbed, starts out very proudly asserting his individualism and loneliness but finally breaks down under pressure of the priest, who forces him into salvation by depicting in gruesome detail the torments that would otherwise await him in hell. Ulrik Christian, however, preserves a little of his stubborn "difference" in his last chivalric outburst (breaking his rapier): "Pardon Jesus!" (*Marie Grubbe*, p. 88).

Rilke's treatment of this Jacobsen theme in *Malte* shows considerable development in scope and originality. Rilke gives us two aspects of the motif: the negative or ironical one (the very opposite of "a death of one's own") and positive instances of "eigener Tod." The irony of the first pages in *Malte* is powerful and original:

Dieses ausgezeichnete Hôtel ist sehr alt, schon zu König Chlodwigs Zeiten starb man darin in eigenen Betten. Jetzt wird in 559 Betten gestorben. Natürlich fabrikmässig. Bei so enormer Produktion ist der einzelne Tod nicht so gut ausgeführt, aber darauf kommt es auch nicht an. Die Masse macht es. Wer gibt heute noch etwas für einen gut ausgearbeiteten Tod? Niemand. Sogar die Reichen, die es sich doch leisten könnten, ausführlich zu sterben, fangen an nachlässig und gleichgültig zu werden; der Wunsch, einen eigenen Tod zu haben, wird immer seltener. Eine Weile noch, und er wird ebenso selten sein wie ein eigenes Leben. Gott, das ist alles da. Man kommt, man findet ein Leben, fertig, man hat es nur anzuziehen. Man will gehen oder man ist dazu gezwungen: nun, keine Anstrengung: Voilà votre mort, monsieur (p. 13).

The positive instances of "eigener Tod" in *Malte* are, of course, the deaths of Kammerherr Brigge ("Wie hätte der Kammerherr Brigge den angesehen, der von ihm verlangt hätte, er

solle einen anderen Tod sterben, als diesen. Er starb seinen schweren Tod."); of Malte's father; and of the Danish king Christian the Fourth. The description (*Malte*, pp. 191-192) of the terrible isolation of the dying king is perhaps the most pathetic of all the death scenes in *Malte*. For hours the dying Christian the Fourth has been mumbling some unintelligible words. When he finally succeeds in making them understood, they are: "Döden, Döden" ("death, death"). They are given by Rilke in the original Danish.

There is no doubt in my mind that these two expressions, "Er starb seinen schweren Tod" and the Danish "Döden, Döden," are derived by Rilke directly from Jacobsen. Taken together, they form a paraphrase of the last sentence in *Niels Lyhne*: "Og endelig döde han da Döden, den vanskelige Död" ("und schliesslich starb er dann den Tod, den schweren Tod."). For the sake of completeness, one might mention the fact that both Rilke and Jacobsen remained "true to character" in both dying "eigene Tode"; like der Kammerherr Brigge, Rilke would not be cheated out of his own death, the particular variety of suffering that he felt was his alone: he refused opiates that would have eased his very great pain, but which would also have deprived him of consciousness. Jacobsen died in utter loneliness after he had refused to see a minister who called on him.

I shall not venture upon a philosophical discussion of the possible religious-metaphysical implications of the "eigener Tod" motif. It seems to me that in the concrete instances of descriptions of "a death of one's own" from Rilke and Jacobsen discussed here there really are not any such implications, except in the case of *Niels Lyhne*. Ulrik Christian Gyldenlöve's breakdown, due to the fear of hell, is simply described by Jacobsen, as is likewise the eventually Christian death of Gerda, *Niels Lyhne's* wife. Jacobsen is neither for nor against their reconversions. The atheistic nature of *Niels Lyhne's* own death is, to be sure, emphasized, and Jacobsen implies that one reason for *Niels Lyhne's* great loneliness is that he insists on living without a God. When he is in great pain, he reflects that it might have been good to have a God to pray to (p. 271), but he resists the temptation. Towards the end, feverish, he raves about dying while "standing" and in "armor." In the examples from Rilke,

viz., the deaths of Kammerherr Brigge and Christian the Fourth, there are no religious implications. Towards the end of the journal, of course, Rilke moves in a religious direction in the search of the Prodigal Son for God; this last episode links *Malte* with Obstfelder's *En Præsts Dagbog*, 1900 (German translation, 1901: *Tagebuch eines Priesters*).

Before I proceed to a discussion of Obstfelder's importance for *Malte*, it is my sad duty, however, to record Rilke's last, and so presumably his final, judgment on Jacobsen. It is a little disappointing because it seems to indicate a failure on the part of Rilke to understand, or accept, the, after all, rather successful fusion in Jacobsen of the positivistic naturalist and the highly sensitive, art-for-art's-sake ornate stylist. In his conversations with Maurice Betz in 1925 in Paris Rilke took his leave of Jacobsen with these words:

Es gibt zwei Jacobsen . . . der Jacobsen, dessen Bücher, erfüllt mit Düften und geheimen Tiefen, sich vor uns öffnen wie ein im Traum belauschter Wald. Alles bebt, zittert und schillert in dieser sonderbaren Atmosphäre, in der uns jeder Schritt neuen zauberischen Ausblicken und Entdeckungen in uns zuzuführen scheint. Das ist der Jacobsen, dem ich mich in meiner Jugend mit einer Begeisterung ohnegleichen hingab, in dem Drange, in ihm, wie in einer Quelle, das Leben und die Kraft es darzustellen zu entdecken. . . . Aber hinter diesem Dichter, eins mit ihm und doch verschieden, entdeckte ich nach und nach ein anderes Wesen: einen kranken, verbitterten Mann, der im Grunde sehr unglücklich war, der geneigt war, an allem zu zweifeln, und gegen den Tod und die Macht der Krankheit mit immer gehässigerem Spott ankämpfte, der schliesslich dennoch besiegt wurde und nach und nach Abschied von sich selbst nahm. Er war immer der grosse Dichter, der das Lied der Waldtaube geschrieben hatte und die wundervollen Klagen König Waldermars über den Tod der kleinen Tove:

Mit Toves Stimme flüstert der Wald,
mit Toves Augen schaut der See,
mit Toves Lächeln leuchten die Sterne,
die Wolke schwillt wie des Busens Schnee.

Er hatte aber auch jene Anrufungen geschrieben, in denen eine erschreckende Leere gähnt und die ich nie ohne geheimes Befremden wiedergeben konnte:

Ewig und ohne Veränderung
ist das Leere nur einzig allein.
Alles, was ist und war
und was da strebt zum Sein,
wird geweckt im Keimen und geboren,
wechselt, altert, geht im Tod verloren.

(Betz: *Rilke in Paris*, pp. 139-141).

It is not at all clear what some of the expressions in this long quotation mean. In the first place, I am not sure that it is correct to call the dying Jacobsen "bitter"—his last letters to Edvard Brandes and testimonies from friends like Georg Brandes and Alexander Kielland have nothing to say about bitterness. And what does the phrase "der schliesslich dennoch besiegt wurde" signify? If Rilke here means that in spite of his struggles against illness and death, Jacobsen was finally overcome and had to die, as we all must, then he is, of course, right, but this would not seem to be a particularly valuable piece of information. If by the phrase in question he means that Jacobsen gave up his atheism on his deathbed and "surrendered" ("besiegt wurde") to a religious faith, he is demonstrably wrong (see Edvard Brandes, *Introduction to Jacobsen's Letters*).

Strangest of all in this Rilke statement to Betz are the words that Jacobsen "... nach und nach von sich selbst Abschied nahm." Again, it is not quite clear what they mean, but they seem to imply that Jacobsen in his early work was the sensitive, impressionistic poet "erfüllt mit Düften und geheimen Tiefen" who later, in bitterness and barren positivism, so to speak, blighted his own poetic visions. If this is what Rilke means, he is wrong. The "two Jacobsens" are much better integrated: Jacobsen's disillusionment was present in his work from the very beginning, while his sensitive, highly ornate and slightly artificial style remained with him to the very end (cf., e.g., *Fru Fönss*). As a matter of fact, the poem *Ewig*, which Rilke cannot translate "ohne geheimes Befremden," was written, as far as we know, in 1875, i.e., earlier than *Marie Grubbe* (1876) and *Niels Lyhne* (1880), which were so greatly admired by Rilke!

In a letter to Countess Dietrichstein in 1916 (*Briefe 1914-1921*, p. 111) Rilke penned a much more correct statement about Jacobsen's *Marie Grubbe*:

Hier ist ein absteigendes, ja ein fallendes Schicksal gezeigt, das Fallen eines Frauenherzens, das einfach der eigenen Schwere nachgibt—ich habe auch erst nach Jahren verstanden, *wie rein die stürzende Kurve durch die dichten und massigen Arabesken der Historie durchgezogen ist.* (The italics are mine.)

This is much more to the point than the comments to Betz in 1925. As a matter of fact, Rilke himself, in his last sentence ad-

mirably explains how beautifully integrated the "two Jacobsens" actually were.

II

Rilke himself, in conversations with Maurice Betz, has given us an account of the Norwegian poet Sigbjørn Obstfelder and a couple of circumstances in the latter's life which had made an impression on Rilke, and which became of importance for *Malte*:

Nachdem Rilke an seine ersten Pariser Eindrücke erinnert hatte, kam er auf jenen anderen Doppelgänger seines Helden zu sprechen, auf den norwegischen Schriftsteller Sigbjørn Obstfelder. Vor dem auf dem Tisch aufgeschlagenen Buch erzählte Rilke: Obstfelder war ein norwegischer Schriftsteller, den er bei der Lektüre zufällig entdeckt hatte. Seine Dichtungen wiesen kunstvollen Impressionismus und eine äusserst geschärfte Feinfühligkeit auf. Sein *Tagebuch eines Priesters* ist die Geschichte einer Seele, die Trotz ihren verzweifelten Versuchen, sich Gott zu nähern, sich immer mehr von ihm entfernt und schliesslich in fiebrigen Nervenleiden zugrunde geht. (?) Obwohl Rilke von Obstfelder nur wenige Dichtungen kannte, machten zwei Umstände im Leben des Norwegers auf ihn Eindruck: dass Obstfelder in Paris gelebt hatte und dass er mit zweiunddreissig Jahren gestorben war und wahrscheinlich in seinem Werk nicht die ganze Grösse seiner edlen verstörten Seele zum Ausdruck gebracht hatte. Diese beiden Umstände stellten die Figur des jungen Obstfelder immer mehr vor Rilkes Geist, von dem Augenblicke an, als er seine sonderbaren Pariser Erlebnisse darzustellen begann und davon träumte, sie in einem imaginären Helden zu verkörpern.

(M. Betz: *Rilke in Paris*, pp. 73-74).

Rilke went on to explain the origins of *Malte*: he had originally started writing some dialogues between a young man and a young girl; the young man was telling the girl about a Danish writer, a certain Malte, who had lived in Paris and had died there quite young. This writer had left behind a diary, and Rilke's young girl implored the young man to show it to her. After a while, Rilke, then, gave up the dialogue form, dropped the minor characters from the plan and concentrated on the diary itself, which thus became *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*. (Betz: *Rilke in Paris*, pp. 75-76). Lydia Baer (*PMLA*, LIV, December 1939, No. 4, p. 1170) surmises that the name of Rilke's hero may have been suggested by the Danon-Norwegian author Malte Conrad Brun, about whom Jacobsen wished to write.

The literary output of Sigbjørn Obstfelder (1866-1900) is rather scanty: a few short stories, some poetry, especially love poems, letters, and perhaps his greatest work, *En Præsts Dagbog*, 1900 (translated into German as *Tagebuch eines Priesters*, Wittenberg, 1901; retranslated as *Tagebuch eines Pfarrers*, Berlin, 1916). *En Præsts Dagbog* is the only one of his works that concerns us here since it is the one work by Obstfelder which we know with certainty that Rilke was acquainted with. The fact that Rilke mentions it in the earlier German version, *Tagebuch eines Priesters*, but not in the later form, *Tagebuch eines Pfarrers*, may perhaps be taken as an indication that he had read it before he finished *Malte* in 1910.

The following is a brief summary of Obstfelder's *En Præsts Dagbog*, in which, incidentally, there is very little plot: The main character, the Minister, is losing his faith in God; he feels himself unclean and unworthy, but he is also defying God and inveighing against the imperfect earth which God has created. Exactly like Rilke's *Malte*, the Minister wanders around in the streets of a big city, presumably Oslo; the terrible things he sees unnerve him to some extent and give him food for the feverish reflections on life and its meaning which make up the book. At the end he becomes desperate in his effort to understand what God intended by creating life; he goes up into the mountains to meet God face to face and to ask Him the vital question why life exists since it is evil and so terribly frustrating to man. In a thunderstorm he is thrown down to the earth and hears a voice shouting something that sounds like "Jahve." After this, if he does not understand, he at least accepts everything. The last pages contain an ecstatic hymn in praise of woman and nature (especially the sun) as forces that reconcile man with life, a peculiar blending of sexuality and pantheism; the image of a woman's breasts from which the milk flows and the globe of the sun mingle into one great symbol of a life-giving force that encourages the Minister to return to men and take up living among them once more. (We thus see that Rilke was not entirely right when he said to Betz that the Minister "schliesslich in fiebrigen Nervenleiden zugrunde geht." On the contrary, he has

almost recovered at the very end. Perhaps Rilke did not finish the book.)

Many similarities in detail exist between *En Præsts Dagbog* and Rilke's *Malte*. The main character in both books is a hypersensitive individual on whom the observation of the horrible scenes he witnesses has the same effect: that of creating an overwhelming sense of fear and near-madness. I do not wish to overstress the possibility of direct influence in concrete details from Obstfelder on Rilke, but many parallels, at least, can be pointed out: One night the Minister in *Tagebuch eines Priesters*, who by now has become very unbalanced, wakes up in his bed and sees something dark creeping across the ray of moonlight on his floor—it is a rat:

It was nothing but a rat. But a thousand thoughts rushed down my spine, cold, shivering. What was it in the rhythm, this rat? . . . It was there. It existed in my world. If I held it a few inches in front of my eyes, its dark, creeping body would cover all suns and all universes.

(*Dagbog*, pp. 115–116; my translation is from the Norwegian).

On another occasion he is tormented by a hideous stench in his room, and when he turns on the light, he sees a big, broad bedbug on his pillow; and he reflects on the *meaning* of the rat and the bedbug; can the God who created these be shaped in the image of man? Is this not the very same thing (minus the religious speculations) which happens in Rilke's *Malte*?—in Malte's gruesome Parisian experiences: the hospital scenes, the man with the St. Vitus' dance, etc.; disease, filth, horror, and the essential absurdity of it all oust all other impressions from Malte's mind, just as Obstfelder's rat, when held close to the eyes, covers "all suns and all universes."

Also in the endings of the two books we find clear parallels in the respective searches of Rilke's Prodigal Son and Obstfelder's Minister for God, with important differences, too, of course. *Malte*, p. 297:

Aber während er sich sehnte, endlich so meisterhaft geliebt zu sein, begriff sein an Fernen gewohntes Gefühl Gottes äussersten Abstand. Nächte kamen, da er meinte, sich auf ihn zuzuwerfen in den Raum; Stunden voller Entdeckung, in

denen er sich stark genug fühlte, nach der Erde zu tauchen, um sie hinaufzureisen auf der Sturmflut seines Herzens.

This is almost literally the ecstatic style in the last pages of *En Præsts Dagbog*. It is doubtful, of course, whether the "solution" which Obstfelder's Minister achieves in his pantheistic ecstasy is a religious solution, but it seems to be the best one he could manage under the circumstances. Rilke is even more cautious in *Malte*; he has not yet found his God, but he is on his way toward him: "Was wussten sie, wer er war. Er war jetzt furchtbar schwer zu lieben, und er fühlte, dass nur Einer dazu imstande sei. Der aber wollte noch nicht."

In summing up, we may say, then, that both Jacobsen and Obstfelder have had a considerable influence on Rilke's *Malte*. This influence is felt almost exclusively in the very early pages of the book and at the very end: in Rilke's independent use of the Jacobsen theme of "eigener Tod" and in the Obstfelder-inspired description of confrontation with the horrible in life (Malte's Parisian experiences). The search of the Prodigal Son for God offers important parallels to passages in the last pages of Obstfelder's *Præsts Dagbog*. The occult experiences in *Malte* cannot be derived from either Jacobsen or Obstfelder—notwithstanding Rilke's letter to Hermann Pongs (October 21, 1924), in which he informs Professor Pongs that Malte was made a Dane "because only in the Scandinavian countries does the ghost appear ranged among the possible experiences." Most of the second part of *Malte* is entirely Rilke's own; in Jacobsen we certainly do not find that sort of almost loving lingering over descriptions of pus and putrefaction in which Rilke indulges when describing the illness of Charles the Sixth of France (pp. 251-252); Obstfelder comes closer to that sort of thing, and even he does not go that far. My conclusion is, then, that in spite of its indebtedness to J. P. Jacobsen and Sigbjørn Obstfelder Rilke's *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* remains essentially a very original and a very "Rilkian" book.

IBSEN'S MILL RACE ONCE AGAIN

EINAR HAUGEN

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IT IS scarcely a point of any great significance, and I realize that I am laying myself open to the charge of pedantry by picking up again an item from a discussion which took place some ten years ago. It was brought to mind by an annotation in the valuable Ibsen bibliography for 1936-1946 compiled by Sverre Arestad, which appeared in this journal in August, 1952. An article by Norman L. Willey in 1943, entitled "Factual Inadvertencies in Ibsen's Dramas" (Vol. 17, No. 6), moved both A. E. Zucker and myself to rejoinders in defence of Ibsen. Willey's reply (Vol. 18, No. 2) is described by the bibliographer as having presented "some good evidence against Haugen's objection to the original inclusion of an inadvertency on Ibsen's part in the conditions for suicide in Rosmersholm." At the time I did not find it worth while to reply to Willey's arguments, but it now seems at least amusing to me to set down the answers, if only for the record.

It may be remembered that Willey found the circumstances of the double suicide in Rosmersholm improbable because "the amount of water carried by the mill race would be comparatively insignificant and a jump into the few inches of water it carried would result in nothing more serious than wet feet. . . ." While deprecating the carping nature of such criticism, I pointed out in my reply that "mill race" was a partially misleading translation of Ibsen's *møllefossen*, and that no reader of the original would think of the latter as implying a shallow channel with only a few inches of water. Willey's reply (Vol. 18, No. 2) seemed to miss the point entirely; although admitting that *møllefoss* means a waterfall with a mill beside it, he asserted that "after reading *Rosmersholm* I imagine most people would come to the conclusion that Ibsen used the word for *møllerenne*."

Now *møllerenne* means (quoting *Norsk Riksmålsordbok*) "trerenne som leder vannet til drivhjulet i en vannmølle," i.e., a wooden conduit leading the water to the wheel of a mill. In

other words: Willey contends that Ibsen means something quite different from what he says, something which would indeed have been a "factual inadvertency" if he had really said it. No one could drown in a *møllerenne*!

The arguments advanced by Willey to defend his original contention included an assertion that the "prosperous Rosmer family" is unlikely to have chosen a home site "in the immediate vicinity of a noisy and dangerous waterfall." This hardly carries much weight in view of the value of waterpower to the estates of southern Norway in the old days. But the complete refutation fell into my hands after I started writing this note, when I received Otto Lous Mohr's recent publication *Henrik Ibsen som Maler* (Oslo, 1953). There, on page 57, is a photograph of the estate which Mohr thinks Ibsen used as a model for Rosmersholm, complete with mansion, waterfall, footbridge and all! This hardly makes it necessary to discuss Willey's further contention that a bridge over a waterfall would not be a *klopp*, but a *bro*, or that the word *rekkeverket* proves it had a rail on one side only. If further evidence were necessary, one could turn to Ibsen's drawing in Mohr's book on page 29, where a footbridge (called *klopp*) over a waterfall is pictured. This one is less substantial than the one in *Rosmersholm*, for it lacks even the hand-rail.

My comment on the inadequacy of "millrace" as a translation of *møllefoss* was turned by Willey into an implied criticism of the translators. He maintained that I was the first to suggest that it was anything but a millrace, and he mobilized the authority of William Archer and others against this idea. The problem here is one of preserving the values of the original in a translation. A *møllefoss* is a *foss* (waterfall, rapids) which drives a mill, but it is not necessarily the channel through which the water runs while driving the mill. The mills I have seen in Norway have not been located in the main channel, but beside it, where the water could be diverted through a conduit to the water wheel. If millrace means the same to an English-speaking audience, well and good; but it is evident that it did not mean this to Willey, since he could contend that Ibsen meant a channel with only a few inches of water in it. English dictionaries

define a millrace as "the channel in which the current of water driving a mill wheel flows to the mill" or as "the current itself." "Millrace" is thus not precisely the same as a *møllefoss*, but no other word suggests itself as better in English.

That it nevertheless, and in spite of Willey's contention, will do as a place for suicides even in our own time and country was forcefully brought home to me quite recently. On December 12, 1953, a woman living in Brodhead, Wisconsin, is reported to have "committed suicide by jumping from a bridge near her home into the 'old millrace,' according to the Green County coroner. . . . Her body was recovered about three blocks down the Rock River from the bridge." (*Capital Times*, Madison, Wis., December 14, 1953, page 2).

In the face of such tragic facts our criticisms fade into their proper perspective. The motives of Zucker and myself in rejecting Willey's strictures were hardly what he was pleased to call them, viz., a "liturgical worship" of Ibsen. Our obvious purpose was merely to rescue him from a sterile and pedantic criticism. It now seems likely that in so doing we were ourselves being stuffy. Ibsen will live without our help.

THE SHIFT OF GENDER IN CERTAIN MODERN SWEDISH AND DANISH WORDS

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I

Danish-Swedish krig 'War'

DANISH-SWEDISH *krig* is a loan word borrowed from MLG *krīch*.¹ In Danish, *krig* is of common gender (*krig-en*), in Swedish of neuter gender (*krig-et*). The Danish common gender corresponds to the original masculine gender of MLG *krīch* (Dutch *krijg*, NHG *der Krieg*). It is a question then why the Swedish did not likewise preserve the common gender.

A loan word usually retains the gender of its foreign prototype unless there exists some native pattern, either formal or semantic, into which the loan word fitted, thereby resulting in a shift of gender. A good example of the formal pattern is the Swedish word *teater*, which is now of common gender (*teater-n*) but in the 17th century was of neuter gender² (*teatr-et*), which is still preserved in Mod. Danish, in accord with the neuter gender of the Latin word *theātrum* (Gr. *θεάτρον*), from which the Danish-Swedish word is derived. The shift from neuter to common gender in Swedish may be explained as due to the fact that the loan word *teat-er* fitted into the pattern of native substantives of common gender with the end syllable *-er*, such as *seg-er* "victory." The end syllable *-er* in the loan word *teat-er* was identified with the end syllable *-er* in the native type *seg-er*, whereby the original neuter gender of *teat-er* was discarded for the common gender in order to accord with the common gender of the native pattern *seg-er*, hence *teatr-et* > *teater-n* after the pattern of the type *seger-n*. No such formal pattern, however, can be assumed for the shift from common to neuter gender in Danish *krig-en* to Swedish *krig-et*. The word *krig* represents a monosyllabic stem and does not fit into any native morphological pattern as does

¹ Cf. Falk-Torp, *Norw.-Dän. Etym. Wörterbuch*, I, 579; Hellquist, *Svensk etym. ordbok*,² I, 509^b.

² Cf. Hellquist, II, 1171^a.

leat-er into the pattern of *seg-er*. The shift of gender in Swedish *krig-et* (from earlier *krig-en*) must therefore be due to some native semantic pattern, i.e., that the neuter gender was borrowed from some native word of neuter gender, which was either a synonym for or closely akin in sense to *krig* "war." This word could very well have been the neuter substantive *slag* "blow," which is also used in the sense of "battle" (cf. *slaget vid Leipzig*, Germ. *die Schlacht bei Leipzig* "the battle of Leipzig"). *Krig* "war" and *slag* "battle" are, to be sure, not synonyms, but they are so closely akin in sense—"battle" denoting a specific phase of "war"³—that it is plausible to assume that this association in sense led to an association in gender, whereby *krig* followed the gender pattern of *slag*. A good example of this type of gender borrowing is the Mod. German loan word *die Mauer* (<Lat. *mūr-us*, masc.) "wall," which borrowed its feminine gender from the native synonym *die Wand* "wall"; the two words were later somewhat differentiated in sense. The neuter substantive *slag* in the sense of "battle" exists likewise in Danish, but the common gender of the loan word *krig* was nevertheless retained in Danish no doubt because MLG influence, via the Hanseatic League and through geographical proximity, was more extensive in Danish than in Swedish.

II

The Neuter Gender of Danish helbred 'Health'

Danish *helbred* is derived from the Late ON form *heilbrigði*, a feminine abstract, and therefore the neuter gender of *helbred-et* represents a shift from the common gender preserved in the Norwegian (*riksmål*) *helbred-en*. ODan. *helbregð*, as well as OSwed. *helbregda*, still preserved the original feminine gender reflected in Norwegian *helbred-en*.

I attribute this shift of gender in Danish *helbred-et* from earlier *helbred-en* to the influence of the neuter gender of the substantive *held* "good fortune, good luck" (another case of gender borrowing), due to association in sense between "good health" and "good fortune." That the two words, *helbred* and *held*, were also formally associated with each other is proved by

³ Note that the Greek and Latin words for "war," *πόλεμος* and *bellum*, also occur in the sense of "battle."

the fact that the final *-d* in the form *hel-d* can be explained in no other way than as borrowed from the final *-d* in *heldbre-d*. The form *held* is derived from the ON neuter substantive *heill* "good omen, good fortune," which would have yielded a Mod. Danish form **hell*. That the *ld* in *held* does not represent an orthographical variant of *ll*, as in *falde* for *falle* "to fall," is proved by the fact that in the form *held* the *d* is never pronounced as *l*, but always as a voiced dental stop; cf. the adjective *heldig* "lucky" (with the phoneme *d*) over against *hellig* "holy." The semantic point of contact between the two words, *helbred* "good health" and *held* "good fortune," was furnished by the root **hail-* "whole, unimpaired." This basic sense is clearly preserved in the simplex *held* "good fortune in general, good luck," but has been particularized in the compound *hel-bred* "good physical condition, good health" (literally "appearance of good health"—*bred* < ON *brigði* "appearance"). This particularization in sense from "good" to "good health" is well illustrated by Mod. Norwegian-Swedish *bra*, as in the Swedish sentence: "Han är en *bra* karl, men han mår inte *bra*, han är inte *bra*." "He is a good fellow, but he does not feel well, he is not in good health." In the formula for greeting, Swedish *hell dig*: Danish *hil dig*, both senses ("good fortune" and "good health") are included, perhaps in part due to the influence of Latin *salus*, which included both senses; cf. Eng. *salute*, *hail the queen*, as wishing her both "good health" and "good fortune, happiness."

Because of this semantic and formal association between Danish *helbred* "good health" and *held* "good luck" it seems justified to assume that *helbred* borrowed its neuter gender from *held*. That the Norwegian *riksmål* retained, alongside the Danish neuter gender (*helbred-et*), the original common gender (*helbred-en*) was probably due to the influence of the common gender of the synonymous word *helse(n)* = Swedish *hälsa*.

III

Swedish människa: Danish menneske "Human Being"

Swedish *människa* is of feminine gender, Danish *menneske* of neuter gender. That the word in Danish was originally of feminine gender, as in Swedish, is attested by the biblical phrase *menneskens søn* "the Son of man" for Mod. Danish *menneskets*

son. The word represents a substantivized form of the adjective *mann-isk- "human" (cf. Goth. *mann-isk-s*:ON *menn-sk-r* "human"), OSwed. *menska*: ON *mennska*, a feminine abstract denoting "humanity." OSwed. *menska* is recorded only in the sense of "goodness, kindness" (cf. Hellquist, I, 680*), but this must represent a secondary sense (cf. Eng. *humane* "kindly" <human) derived from the basic sense of "humanity" as in the parallel ON *ōn*-abstract *mennska* "humanity," from which the concrete sense of "a human being" developed. That the Mod. Swedish and Danish forms of the word, *människa* and *menneske*, preserve the original vowel *i* (>*e* in Danish) of the adjectival suffix *-isk is, according to the current view, due to the fact that the word was introduced at a very early period into Swedish and Danish from the WGmc languages. The WGmc forms of the word (OS-OHG *mennisco*, OE *mennisca*, OFris. *manniska*) all preserved the middle vowel -i- and were all of masculine gender, representing the substantivized form of the weak adjective in the concrete sense of "one who has human qualities, a human being." Both Falk-Torp⁴ and Hellquist⁵ record these WGmc forms, but they do not explain the discrepancy in gender between the masculine forms in WGmc and the feminine forms in Swedish-Danish with secondary shift of feminine to neuter gender in Danish. This discrepancy can be explained only on the ground that Swedish *människa* (>Danish *menneske*) is a direct descendant of OEast Scandinavian (OSwed.) *menska* in the abstract sense of "humanity," but with the middle vowel -i- borrowed from the WGmc forms at a time when the abstract sense of "humanity" had passed over into the concrete sense of "a human being," which was identical with the concrete sense of the masculine WGmc forms; otherwise the feminine gender of Mod. Swedish *människa* cannot be explained. The shift from the abstract to the concrete sense of a *person* having the qualities implied in the abstract, as in OSwed. *menska* "humanity">Mod. Swed. *människa* "human being," is a very common semantic phenomenon; cf. Eng. *youth* (abstract)>*youth* "a young man" (concrete), *beauty* (abstract)>"a beauty" (concrete) as referring to "a

⁴ Cf. Falk-Torp, I, 714.

⁵ Cf. Hellquist, I, 680*.

beautiful woman," *honor* (abstract) > (*Your*) *Honor* (concrete) as referring "to a person held in high honor," etc.

The shift of gender in Danish from feminine (*mennesk-en*) to neuter (*mennesk-et*) may easily be explained as due to the fact that the neuter gender served to include both sexes, man and woman. This idiomatic use of the neuter gender is a very common linguistic phenomenon; cf. the neuter gender of the word for "child"; Scandinavian *barn* (Goth.—OHG *barn*, OE *bearn*), Germ. *das Kind*, Gk. τὸ τέκνον, etc. The neuter gender of Mod. German *Mensch* (*das Mensch*) has a derogatory implication, the so-called *neutrum contemptiois*, and has nothing to do with the neuter gender of Danish *mennesk-et*, which is synonymous with *der Mensch* and not with *das Mensch*.

IV

The Double Gender of Swedish Tack "Thanks"

The Swedish substantive *tack*, like Danish *tak*, is normally of common gender representing the original feminine gender of OSwed. *þak* (= ON *þakk*), from which the word is derived. The normal common gender (*mycken tack, detta är tacken för dina tjänster*) is regularly preserved except when the word *tack* is used with the indefinite article, where it has suffered a shift into the neuter gender (*ett tack, ett hjärtligt tack för dina tjänster*). Danish, on the other hand, preserves the common gender of *tak* when used with the indefinite article (*en tak, en hjertelig tak*). Since there is no difference in sense between Swedish *tack* with or without the indefinite article, the shift of gender when the word *tack* is used with the indefinite article must in some way be connected with the use of the indefinite article. Let us take, for example, the phrase *ett hjärtligt tack* "(a) cordial thanks." This phrase is characteristic of the conventional epistolary style. The adjective *hjärtlig* "heartly, cordial" is regularly used in conveying greetings (cf. *hjärtliga hälsningar*) and in letters is equivalent to our formal "Cordially yours," to which the name of the writer is attached at the end of the letter. Epistolary courtesy always requires some recognition of "thanks" when a letter is answered. The conventional phrase for expressing this formal courtesy is *ett hjärtligt tack* (*för ditt brev, etc.*). The neuter gender of *tack* in this phrase may be explained as due to the influence of the neuter

substantive *ord* "word" or *svar* "answer," which is left unexpressed. The writer is sending a "word" (*ord*) of "thanks" (*tack*) as an "answer" (*svar*) to his correspondent. The implication in the Swedish phrase *ett hjärtligt tack* (over against Danish *en hjertelig tak*) may be expressed without ellipsis as follows: *ett ord (eller svar) till hjärtlig tack* "a word (or answer) to express (till) my sincere thanks"; cf. the compound substantive *tacksägelse* "a saying or expression of thanks." Now when the words *ord* (or *svar*) till were omitted, the adjective *hjärtlig* stood directly after the neuter article *ett* and hence took on the neuter ending *-t*, which originally belonged to *ord* (or *svar*) and not to *tack*, with the result that the substantive *tack* in this formal phrase is now felt to be of neuter gender:

cf. *ett [ord till] hjärtlig tack*
 ett *hjärtligt tack*.

When in Swedish we refer to a word as such, the indefinite article referring to this work is always of neuter gender (*ett*), regardless of the gender of the word in question, due to the omission of the neuter substantive *ord* "word"; cf. "För svensk *piga* skulle vi vänta *ett pika* med *k*," where "*ett pika*" stands for "*ett ord pika*," for *pika* could never be of neuter gender. Similarly, in *ett tack* and *ett hjärtligt tack* the feminine substantive *tack* is felt to be of neuter gender only because of the omission of the words *ord till*. The full phrase without ellipsis was, of course, not suited for a conventional epistolary formula and hence was abbreviated, for the words *ord till* were not necessary any more than the word *ord* was necessary in the phrase *ett pika*. A similar ellipsis in Mod. Swedish occurs in phrases in which the anomalous use of the genitive case appears, such as: "Skall du gå till Bergströms eller förbi Bergströms?" Here the anomalous use of the genitive case is due to the implication of an unexpressed word for "house" or "home," just as the neuter gender of *tack* is due to the implication of an unexpressed word *ord* or *svar*.

The explanation which I have given for the double gender of Swedish *tack* is all the more plausible in that *tack* represents a native Swedish word and therefore its double gender could not be due to foreign influence, as is the case with so many loan words, such as *doft-en:doft-et*, *paraply-en:paraply-et*, etc. The

double gender of a few native Swedish words may, however, be traced back to ON conditions, e.g., *finger-n*: *fingr-el* < ON *fingr*, which was of both masculine and neuter gender, but OSwed. *þak* (= ON *þakk*), from which Mod. Swedish *tack* is derived, was always of feminine gender.

When used in the plural number, as in *många tack*, the form *tack* does not represent the plural form of the neuter singular *tack*, as in *ett tack* (cf. *ett barn*, plur. *barn*), but the singular form *tack* of the original common gender, as in *tack-en*, used to express a collective idea. Otherwise we cannot explain the Danish singular form *tak* used in the plural number, as in *mange tak*, for in Danish the singular form *tak* is never used in the neuter gender (cf. *en tak* over against Swedish *ett tack*). The Danish-Swedish usage of the singular form *ta(c)k* in the plural number must therefore be of common origin, expressing a collective idea, for the form *ta(c)k* cannot be derived from the original plural form OSwed. *þakkir* (ON *þakkir*), which would have yielded Mod. Swedish **tacker*: Mod. Danish **takker* "thanks"; cf. Mod. Icelandic *bestu þakkir*, where the ON plural form is preserved. This proves that the neuter gender of Swedish *tack* is confined to the singular number and thus confirms my hypothesis that the neuter gender of Swedish *tack* was due to the ellipsis of the neuter substantive *ord* or *svar* with the indefinite article *ett*, which can, of course, be used only in the singular number. That the singular form *tack* was used in the plural number to express a collective idea, as in *många tack*, may be explained on the ground that the expression of gratitude, which represents a single unit of thought (cf. *tack-sägelse*) may imply a repetition which involves more than one unit of thought, as in *tack, tack!* The singular form *tack* was then used in the plural number as implying that *tack* in *många tack* was repeated "many times," the repetition implying a collective sense; cf. German "Ich danke dir *vielmals*." This collective sense of *tack* was no doubt reinforced by French usage, as is attested by Danish *tusind tak* "a thousand thanks," which is a loan translation from the French *merci mille fois*. French *merci* is here used in the singular number, as is the Danish form *tak* in *tusind tak*, but is pluralized in sense by the addition of *mille fois*, for "gratitude expressed a thousand times" is equivalent to "a thousand thanks."

THE PROBLEM OF THE PROPER TRANSLATION OF OLD NORSE NAMES

LEE M. HOLLANDER

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A WITTY Göttingen professor and contemporary of Frederick the Great proposed to translate the name Hippokrene by Rossbach, alluding to the brilliant Prussian victory over the French and its effects on the German Parnassus. But I am sure no one in his right mind would think of stating that "Strife-Ender was one of Man-Defender's generals in the Battle of Big-Town," instead of "Lysimachos was one of Alexander's generals in the Battle of Megalopolis." Yet, though one may laugh at such a translation of Greek names, this is precisely what is done intransigently with Old Norse names in the famous German Thule Series of translations from Old Norse literature—no doubt with the laudable purpose of bringing the matter closer to the reader. With humorless consistency every single name, whether of place or person, and every attribute and nickname, is transmogrified into unrecognizability. I doubt if much, or anything, is gained thereby. Special maps made for the occasion are required, just as imaginary and unreal, so far as the names go, as, e.g., R. L. Stevenson's map of Treasure Island; with names more queer-looking and uncouth than those of the original. Imagine the English countryside thus transformed overnight by being given German names! And after all, is anything gained by putting Haldenende for the Old Norse Hlitharendi? Is Aigospotamoi less poetic than "Goat Rivers?"

The same was done, though to a lesser extent, by English translators in Victorian, and even our own times; and this, together with the Wardour Street antiquarian vocabulary of men like William Morris and Dasent, has contributed to make the reading of the sagas—written, if you please, in the most natural style in the world—a chore rather than a pleasure. With the best of intentions they have done much to hinder the appreciation and introspection of saga literature in the English-speaking world.

This sort of thing is not attempted in the case of other

foreign literatures—least, perhaps, in the classic literatures with their nimbus of sacrosanctity, although the meaning of many names in them is perfectly clear to one knowing Latin and Greek. Then why in Old Norse literature? The answer must be, because of the obvious, though alas! often deceptive, similarity of the Scandinavian to the other Germanic languages. In the case of Germany, also that peculiar possessiveness which holds that *quod bene dictum est, meum est* and which has made the Germans “appropriate” the masterpieces of other nations. In the case of Icelandic place names in particular, the tendency to translate is encouraged by their utter simplicity: owing to the fact that barring a few straggling Irish anchorites the island was found uninhabited, the place names are all new and plainly dependent on topographic features or due to incidents during the settlement where they do not bear the names of the settlers. Thus we have place names like *Áss* (“Ridge”), *Borg* (“Stronghold”), *Hólar* (“Hillocks”), *Strandar* (“Strands”), *Snæfell* (“Snow Mountain”); *Svínavatn* (“Swine Lake”), *Kambssness* (“Comb Ness”); and *Ólafsdalr*, *Hrafnkelsstaðir* (“Hrafnkelstead”), *Thórolfsfell*, etc.

The other extreme, viz., not to translate any name whatever, has to my knowledge never been followed; though some recent translations have tended in that direction; farthest, perhaps, Gwyn Jones in his *Vatnsdalers' Saga* (1944), with explanation of names in his notes, and Ralph B. Allen, *the Saga of Gísli the Son of Sour* (!). Even so, they often venture beyond their depth and, like fools, have rushed in where the proverbial angels—here, the competent philologists—have feared to tread. Few, to be sure, have gone so far as the famous economist, Thorstein Veblen, in his labor of love, the translation of the *Laxdæla Saga* (1925), where almost every page is enlivened by thundering boners such as Audun Shivers (for *Auðun Skqkull*), Thorolf Mustard-Whiskers (for *Thórolf Mostrarskegg*), and ruined by vulgarisms such as Billigoat Buttes (for *Hafratindar*). But E. R. Eddison, *Egil's Saga* (Cambridge, 1930) lags not far behind him when in his mania for Anglo-Saxonification¹ he writes Alf Ash-

¹ Though in his pretentious, and for the most part utterly wrong-headed *Terminal Essay on Some Principles of Translation* (*ibid.*) he deplores that very thing.

man (for *Alf askmaðr*), the Sparebiders Folk (for *Sparabyggvafylki*), Eastaway (for *Austrvegr*), Nidoyce (for *Niðaróss*)—to mention only a few of a list which might be considerably extended. Allen, too, occasionally fathers a sorry bastard like Vestan (*sic*) for *Vésteinn*, Nefstod for *á Nefstoðum*, Sabol (*sic*) for *Sæból*. Ignotum per ignotius!

After all, one may ask, why should names have to be translated, anyway? It rarely occurs to even the educated reader to wonder about the meaning of names. Do any of the millions of the devourers of Sherlock Holmes and Agatha Christie care a snap of their fingers whether the hero be called Sir Stewart Montmorency and the heroine, plain Betty Fenwick? Or do not in fact a surprising number of persons show an utter lack of curiosity with regard to the meaning and derivation of their own names?

However, the conscientious translator of a foreign masterpiece always faces the task of having to present his readers with a text as near like the original as is humanly possible and therefore is inhibited from interposing too many unwarranted difficulties. With regard to our problem it would be pedantic, occasionally even unwise, not to translate or, in the case of historically well-known persons or places, to furnish the time-honored equivalent. To be concrete, if in English it would show an affectation of learning to say Carolus Magnus for Charlemagne, Horatius Quintus Flaccus for Horace, Wien instead of Vienna, Napoli instead of Naples, why should it be any better to use Thrándheim for Drontheim, Knút for Canute, Austrveg for the Baltic?

While this will be granted out of hand, we still are confronted with the problem as to how to deal with the host of less well-known names, personal and local.

Let us consider personal names first. Here, we shall agree that it is by all means wisest to leave them severely alone, even such which the philologist can explain satisfactorily; though I can see no harm in adopting the English form of names like Eric (*Eiríkr*), Oliver (*Olver*), Harold (*Haraldr*), but not in such names as Ulfr, Hrafn, Hrólf! Also, I would regard it as ill-advised to change names like *Brján*, *Njáll*, *Kormákr*, embedded as they are in saga narrative, back to their original Celtic forms. Not many

will take exception to occasionally writing Grím Njálsson to vary the analytic Grím, the son of Njál; because, familiar as we all are with this sort of patronymic, the reader will hardly confuse it with the modern family name.

We are on fairly firm ground when we have to deal with the exceedingly numerous and colorful nominal attributes and with adjectival substantives. Few would hesitate to render the by-name of King *Svein tjáguskegg* with Forkbeard, that of Earl *torf-Einar* with Turf-Einar, of *Eyjólfur Nef* with Nose; and no one, I am sure, would hesitate to call Ari the Learned (*inn fróði*), Eric the Red (*inn rauði*), Finnbogi the Strong (*inn rammi*), etc., etc. It is true, though, that many names in both categories are ill understood or of dubious meaning; in which case footnotes or tentative translations in parentheses following the cognomen are the only alternatives—unless, indeed, we leave well enough alone.

As for place names we must be even more cautious. We must everlastingly be on our guard against making them unrecognizable. This would be the case with the uncompounded place names referred to above if we rendered *Borg* by "Fort," *Áss* by "Ridge," *Hof* by "Temple," *Lund* by "Grove."

I grant that opinions may be divided when it comes to certain topographic features such as rivers, lakes, islands, etc. Scandinavians of course know that *á* means river; most English readers do not. Therefore, rendering, e.g., *Thverá* by "the Thverá River" does not appear to me any more of a tautology than, e.g., speaking about "the Rio Grande River";² and seems more acceptable than "Cross River" or "Thver River." Similarly, "Mývatn Lake" seems to me decidedly preferable to "Gnat Lake" or "Mý Lake"; "Flatey Island," to "Flat Island"; "the Gullfoss Cataract," to "the Gold Waterfall"—the English, to be sure, would understand what is meant by Force—; "the Almannagjá Gorge," to "the Almanná Gorge"; "the Viðímýrr Swamp" to "the Wither Swamp" (which Eddison renders as "the Withymire"). And I prefer to speak of "the Saurbær Farms," "the Hofjökull Glacier," "the Skógahverfi District" rather than

² Cf. also "the City of Constantinople," "the Orkney Islands."

translate these names into such as are not to be found on any map.³

This, I think, is as far as we can go in laying down general principles. In the last analysis, translation, even the translation of names, is an art for which certain rules can be given—only to be broken whenever the dominant unwritten (and unwritable) dictates of fitness and good taste override them; an art in which consistency is desirable but often unattainable.

One more word concerning the form of names taken over from the Old Norse. I suppose every one is agreed that the masculine nominative ending *-r* (as in *Thrándheimr*, *Hrappr*) be omitted and the geminates *-ll*, *-nn*, *-rr*, (as in *Egill*, *Gunnarr*, *Thorsteinn*) be simplified. The voiced dental spirant *ð* is best rendered by *d*, and the voiceless *þ* by *th* (thus *Thórd*, *ON Thórðr*, and *Thórðarson*).

In opposition to the prevailing practice of not marking long vowels in Old Norse names I consider it important to use the acute accent in order to prevent, if possible, mistaken pronunciations. The macron mark seems out of the question, and no other diacritic sign is available. The length mark appears indispensable in names like *Njál*, *Fljótdale*, *Grjóta*, especially if *i* be preferred to *j* in the rising diphthong, and also in *Thráin*, *Glúm*, *Grím*, *Hrút*, *Kári*—in fact, the list could be extended indefinitely. All that is necessary to make the device work is the categoric statement (perhaps in the Preface) that all vowels so marked are long, all others short—this latter statement in order to show that the tendency, present in all other modern Germanic languages, to lengthen the vowel in open syllables did not exist in Icelandic, as, e.g., in *Sigurd*, *Ari*, *Stafafell*. There should follow another categoric statement to the effect that all names without exception are stressed on the first syllable.

³ Eddison, to be sure, makes Eresound out of *Eyrarsund* (Öresund), Swede-Realm out of *Svítaveldi*, Nidoyce out of *Niðaróss* (Drontheim)! Vestigia terrent.

THE FORTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCANDINAVIAN STUDY

The Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study met in the Lecture Hall of the Denkmann Memorial Library on the campus of Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, on Friday, May 7, and Saturday, May 8, 1954.

FIRST SESSION, FRIDAY, MAY 7, 1954, 2:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by the Society's President, Professor Joseph E. A. Alexis.

Professor Arthur Wald, representing the host institution, delivered an address of welcome in which he referred to the two previous meetings of the Society on the Augustana campus. Professor Wald also extended the greetings of Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, President of Augustana College, who is at present in Sweden.

The following committees were appointed by the chairman: for Resolutions, Professors Lee M. Hollander and A. M. Sturtevant; for Auditing, Professors Gösta Franzén and Thor Gabrielsen; for Ballots, Professors Karl H. Carlson and Lloyd Hustvedt.

The reading of papers was begun:

1. *Marcus Thrane as a Playwright*—15 minutes. By Miss Henrietta C. K. Naeseth, Augustana College. Paper discussed by Professor Hollander.

2. *Semantic Shifts in Certain Scandinavian Words*—25 minutes. By Professor A. M. Sturtevant, University of Kansas. Commented on by Professors Hollander, Kjelds, Pretorius, and Schach.

3. *America in Norway*—20 minutes. By Professor Thor Gabrielsen, University of Chicago. This paper led to a general discussion of the importance of mutual cultural understanding between the Scandinavian countries and the United States.

At this point the meeting was recessed to enable the members of the Society to have coffee and cookies, which were served by

the Augustana Art Association. Following the refreshments the reading of papers was resumed:

4. *Pär Lagerkvist and Archaic Art*—20 minutes. By Professor Walter W. Gustafson, Upsala College. In the absence of Professor Gustafson, the paper was read by Professor Pretorius of Upsala College. Comments by Professors Franzén and Wald.

5. *The Problem of the Proper Translation of Old Norse Names*—15 minutes. By Professor Lee M. Hollander, University of Texas. The paper was discussed by Professors Franzén, Pretorius, and Schach.

This session was attended by forty-two persons.

At 6:30 the annual dinner was held at Andreen Hall. Professor Alexis presided. The invocation was given by the Reverend Dr. Knut Erickson, Vice-President and Comptroller of Augustana College. The program included a number of short addresses by Professors Sturtevant, Hollander, Wald, Kjelds, Schach, Hunter and by Dr. Esther Chilstrom Meixner, Mr. Hedin Bronner, and Mrs. Rosa M. Nelson. Mrs. Franzén presented a reading from Selma Lagerlöf's *Gösta Berlings saga*. Mr. Ralph Stang, baritone, sang five solos. The evening program was concluded with the group-singing of songs in Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish, led by Professor Wald.

During the evening, greetings were conveyed to the Society from the following members, who were unable to attend: Professor Richard Beck, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Professor Walter W. Gustafson, Dr. Amandus Johnson, Professor E. Gustav Johnson, Dr. Nils G. Sahlin, Professor Martin Söderbäck, and Professor Axel Johan Uppvall.

SECOND SESSION, SATURDAY, MAY 8, 9:15 A.M.

The meeting was called to order by President Alexis.

The financial report by the Secretary-Treasurer was read and accepted together with the report by the Committee on Auditing.

The report by the Managing Editor was read and accepted. This report included a letter from the Banta Publishing Company, in which it was stated that the publication of the May

issue of the *Studies* would be delayed about a month because of a strike at the Publishing Company.

The Ballot Committee reported that in the election by the membership at large the following officers had been elected: President, Professor Gösta Franzén, University of Chicago; Vice-President, Professor Paul Schach, University of Nebraska; members of the Advisory Committee, Professor Kenneth Bjork, St. Olaf College, and Professor Johann S. Hannesson, Cornell University. The President further announced the re-election of the Managing Editor and the Secretary-Treasurer.

In accordance with the rules of the Constitution, the following amendment of the first sentence of Article 12 of the Constitution, which had been accepted at the forty-third meeting of the Society (1953), was again read by the president and unanimously approved: "No officer shall receive salaries; but the Secretary-Treasurer shall be allowed \$200.00 per year from which expenses for clerical help shall be paid."

The following report of the Committee on Resolutions was read and adopted:

The Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study wishes to express its gratitude to Augustana College for the generous hospitality extended to the members of the Society at its forty-fourth annual meeting. The Society is especially grateful to the Local Committee on Arrangements, Dr. Henrietta Naeseth and Dr. Arthur Wald, for their efforts in making the meeting a success. To all those who participated in the delightful entertainment in the evening the Society is profoundly grateful. Augustana College has always been a wonderful host to the Society, and we can only regret that we so seldom are their guests.

LEE M. HOLLANDER
A. M. STURTEVANT

It was again announced that the forty-fifth annual meeting of the Society will be held in May, 1955, at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

On the motion of Professor Lee M. Hollander it was voted

to appoint a committee to study the advisability of sending back-numbers of the *Studies* to European libraries which may have been unable to purchase them because of the war. The following committee was appointed by the President for this purpose: Professors Lee M. Hollander, Martin Söderbäck, and Mr. Hedin Bronner.

Mr. Bronner made an announcement concerning the forthcoming third survey of Scandinavian courses offered in American institutions of learning. The report was commented on by Professors Wald and Franzén.

The Secretary-Treasurer was instructed to explore the possibilities of securing wider publicity for the activities of the Society both at home and abroad through Scandinavian-American newspapers, through Scandinavian embassies, and through other agencies and media.

The outgoing President surrendered the chair to the incoming President and the reading of papers was resumed:

6. *A Study in Modern Swedish Word Order*—15 minutes. By Professor Joseph Alexis, University of Nebraska. Comments by Professors Franzén, Pretorius, and Wald.

7. *Translations from Swedish Contemporary Poetry*—15 minutes. By Professor Grace Hunter, Grinnell College. Paper discussed by Professors Franzén, Hollander, Naeseth, Pretorius, and Wald.

8. *A Report on the Britannica World Dictionary*—15 minutes. By Mrs. Gösta Franzén. Discussion by almost all present.

Twenty-six persons were present at the session.

TREASURER'S REPORT

From May 1, 1953 to May 1, 1954

<i>Income</i>		
On hand May 1, 1953.....	\$1,548.86	
Dues and donations.....	1,407.38	
Interest on savings account.....	4.46	
Sale of <i>Scandinavian Studies</i>	39.25	
From Elizabeth Marshall estate.....	15.90	
Advertising in <i>Scandinavian Studies</i>	166.00	
Income from endowment.....	460.00	\$3,641.85

Disbursements

Banta Publishing Company			
<i>Scandinavian Studies</i> , Vol. 25, No. 2....	\$486.11		
<i>Scandinavian Studies</i> , Vol. 25, No. 3....	461.26		
<i>Scandinavian Studies</i> , Vol. 25, No. 4....	480.37		
<i>Scandinavian Studies</i> , Vol. 26, No. 1....	501.91	\$1,929.65	
Graves Printing Company, letterheads, envelopes, ballots, programs.....	60.20		
Postmaster, 2000 stamped and printed envelopes, 100 stamped envelopes, miscellaneous postage.....	65.82		
Nebraska Book Store, manila envelopes.....	1.30		
Refund to Moore-Cottrell.....	1.90		
Clerical help.....	142.50		
Hartford Accident and Indemnity Co., Bonding of Secretary-Treasurer 4/1/54-4/1/57.....	12.50	\$ 2,213.87	
On hand April 30, 1954.....		\$ 1,427.98	
Endowment Fund (Value as of April 30, 1954).....		9,985.00	
TOTAL ASSETS.....		\$11,412.98	

PAUL SCHACH, *Acting Secretary-Treasurer*

REVIEWS

Sveinsson, Einar Ól. *The Age of the Sturlungs: Icelandic Civilization in the Thirteenth Century*. Translated by Jóhann S. Hannesson. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1953 = *Islandica*. Volume XXXVI. Pp. xi+(1)+180+(3)+1 plate. Price, \$4.00.

REVIEWED BY P. M. MITCHELL, *University of Kansas*.

Occasionally a critic or historian is able to transcend the scholarship in his field of interest and to make a synthetic interpretation based on factual knowledge, perspicacity, and incision. Einar Ólafur Sveinsson's *Sturlungaöld* (Reykjavík, 1940) is such an interpretation. It is gratifying therefore that his book has been made available in English translation as the latest volume of the distinguished annual *Islandica*.

The book is an outgrowth of the author's earlier *Um Njálu* (1933) and is in part the revision of lectures delivered at the University of Iceland, where Einar Ólafur Sveinsson is professor of Icelandic literature. Several of the chapters preserve a vividness of style suggestive of an oral presentation.

The thirteenth century, the Age of the Sturlungs, was also the great age of saga-writing. Scholars have hitherto been wont to concern themselves with the intrinsically valuable prose and poetry produced during the century without fully comprehending the documentary significance of the literature and without seeking in it clues to the far-reaching changes wrought in thirteenth-century Iceland. Professor Sveinsson has undertaken to interpret the era through its literature and has therewith written the *Geistesgeschichte* of the Age of the Sturlungs.

After a stimulating introduction ("Prologue") Professor Sveinsson examines in chapters II through IX several facets of life in the *Sturlungaöld*: the conflict between traditional freedom and encroaching royal authority, the self-confidence of the Icelanders, the introduction of the new literature of chivalry, the importance of class and wealth, the moral standards of the day, the attitude toward death, the rôle of popular amusements and contemporary poetry, and the consciousness of the past. Chapters X through XVII concentrate on the ecclesiastical and

religious changes which differentiated the thirteenth century from preceding centuries. The author points out that the ecclesiastical reforms of the thirteenth century, and especially the enforcement of clerical celibacy, supplanted the native Christianity as it had developed since the year 1000 with an international sort of Christian religion; he argues that these reforms are parallel with the growing subservience demanded by the Norwegian monarchy.

Although Professor Sveinsson's familiarity with sources is unquestioned, one may dispute his underlying and reiterated thesis that there existed a national culture and national feeling prior to the thirteenth century. To claim that the Icelanders had "a sense of the importance of their national life" (p. 41) in the twelfth century is, it seems to this reviewer, to project modern ideas into the Middle Ages.

With an admirable translation of a worthwhile book, the new curator of the Fiske Icelandic Collection has demonstrated his good judgment, meticulousness, and mastery of English. He is particularly to be commended for his intelligent rendering of Icelandic proper names.

On page 29, line 13, "on his progresses" should read "on his visits." Page 40, sixth line from bottom, "scrip" should read "manuscript" or "repertory." On page 70, the quotation "fight with him" is to be taken in the sense "fight for him." The beginning of chapter VII is not clear; the meaning of the first sentence ("Hátterni manna er eins og formið yfirleitt") is apparently "Human behaviour is like all outward form." The notes, index, and genealogical tables added by the translator are helpful, but here and there a term (e.g., "Vindgameithr," p. 74) requires explanation.

Sýnisbók íslenzkra rímna (Specimens of Icelandic *rímur*). Selected by Sir William A. Craigie. Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., London, etc., and H. F. Leiftur, Reykjavík, 1952. Vol. I, pp. lxxv + 306; Vol. II, pp. lxii + 334; Vol. III, pp. xxxii + 414.

REVIEWED BY RICHARD BECK, *University of North Dakota*.

This inclusive and authoritative work on the *rímur* (the Icelandic Metrical Romances) constitutes the fine flower of a

life-long and most fruitful interest in Icelandic literature generally and in the important *rímur*-branch of that rich literature especially. For it is now sixty years since the distinguished compiler of the monumental work under review, Sir William A. Craigie, published his first article on the subject.

During the intervening years, aside from editing and writing a number of books and studies on other phases of Icelandic literature, he has revealed his great appreciation of the *rímur*, together with his all-embracing knowledge and penetrating understanding of that unique type of Icelandic poetry, by his masterful edition of *Skollands rímur* (1908) and his equally noteworthy introduction to *Early Icelandic Rímur (Corpus Codicum Islandicorum Medii Aevi XI, 1938)*, as well as by several important lectures on the subject.

In the course of his visit to Iceland in 1947, Sir William also was the prime mover in the founding of Rímnafélagið, a society organized for the specific purpose of publishing *rímur*, which has already to its credit five significant volumes prepared by specialists in the field.

For centuries the *rímur* were cherished by the Icelandic people as their favorite form of poetry and entertainment, and in his three-volume anthology, *Sýnisbók íslenskra rímnna*, Sir William covers the whole range of the development and the history of the *rímur*-poetry from its beginning in the fourteenth century down to the end of the nineteenth. The first volume contains selections from *rímur* before 1550; the second volume from the period 1550 to 1800; and the third volume includes specimens from the nineteenth century. All the volumes also include a generous selection from the special feature of the *rímur*, the introductory verse or verses known as *mansöngur* (maid-song).

Sir William's large undertaking in making these numerous and varied selections from so vast a body of poetry as contained in the *rímur* has been made all the more difficult because of the fact that only a small portion of them is accessible in print. He has, therefore, had to draw extensively on unpublished material, which makes his achievement all the more remarkable. It is a noteworthy circumstance that this great feat in Icelandic

scholarship is not to be overlooked, for it is the work of a non-Icelander who has only occasionally visited Iceland, and further, it was published when he had reached the age of eighty-five. Small wonder that his achievement has aroused deep admiration and commensurate gratitude on the part of all Icelanders interested in the preservation and the interpretation of their literary heritage.

The following statement from the editor's preface to the third volume will suffice to give an idea of the vastness of the *rimur*-poetry: "It has been calculated that the total number of single *rimur* and sets composed down to the end of the nineteenth century is at least 850."

Sir William's large anthology is of lasting value because of its representative and varied selections from the *rimur* in their entirety and because he has done far more than bring together an extensive and judiciously selected collection from the vast field he surveys.

Each volume begins with an introduction in Icelandic dealing in detail with such fundamental matters as the origin and nature of the *rimur*, the introductory *mansöngur*, the meters, and the language, according to the period in question. An abridged English version of the introduction is suffixed to each volume, making the anthology more accessible and useful to English-speaking and other non-Icelandic scholars.

These introductions, which add immeasurably to the basic value of this great work, bear ample evidence of Sir William's extensive knowledge of the field and his keen insight; and they are characterized by that orderliness and clarity in presentation which result from complete mastery of the subject. His discussions and interpretations cast in many ways a new light on the *rimur*; his familiarity with other literatures enables him to place the *rimur* in their proper perspective in terms of both comparative literature and native Icelandic literature. His thorough treatment of the various meters and their development is particularly informative. He also gives due attention to the literary, historical, cultural, and not least the linguistic importance of the *rimur*, saying in the introduction to the first volume:

Apart from their value as literature, the *rímur* form an important link in the history of Icelandic. There can be no doubt that by their unbroken continuance generation after generation, keeping closely to the same form, and by the extent to which an interest in them prevailed throughout the whole population, they played a great part in preserving the language with so little alteration during so many centuries.

The prefaces, bibliographies, and lists of poets and *rímur* included add to the usefulness of this rich anthology; and as befits a work of such magnitude and importance, it is attractively printed, although it is not free from misprints.

At the conclusion of his preface to the third volume Sir William states: "The idea that an anthology of this kind should be produced did not originate with me, but was suggested to me by my friend Snæbjörn Jónsson and the publisher Ólafur Bergmann Erlingsson." Both these men from Reykjavík are known as genuine lovers of literary and cultural values, as revealed in their publication of numerous scholarly works. Jónsson, it may be added, has translated into Icelandic the introductions and the prefaces to all the volumes in a faithful and commendable fashion.

Sir William further expresses to them, as well as to several other Icelanders, including Finnur Sigmundsson of The National Library of Iceland and Dr. Björn K. Þórólfsson, author of the basic work *Rímur fyrir 1600* (1634), his indebtedness for various assistance rendered. All concerned, and not least the publishers, can rejoice in the gratification of having shared in an undertaking which has resulted in one of the most ambitious and fundamental contributions to Icelandic studies in recent times.

Danske Metrikere. Udgivet af Arthur Arnholtz, Erik Dal, Aage Kabell. I. Fra Bielke til Gerner. J. H. Schultz forlag, Copenhagen, 1953. Pp. xv+410. (Universitetsjubilæets Danske Samfund. Publikation nr. 365.) Price, 22 Danish crowns (paper bound).

REVIEWED BY JENS NYHOLM, *Northwestern University*.

This is the first volume of a projected work that will include all the basic contributions to Danish versification during the baroque and the romantic periods.

The contributions consist of manuscripts, not hitherto published; little-known books, now extremely scarce; and scattered minor publications, never before utilized in prosodic studies. It is the editors' hope that these early works on metrics (which are in many respects not to be considered antiquated) will offer useful material for the student of prosody as well as serve as the basis for a future history of Danish versification.

The volume now at hand deals with the prosody of the baroque period, the first contribution, by Jens Bielke, carrying the date of 1606; the last one, by Henrich Gerner, being dated 1690. It is interesting to note that Bielke is the spokesman for the syllabic meter (based on the number of syllables), maintaining that the quantitative meter of antiquity is hardly applicable in Danish.

In the second contribution (also of 1606), Hans Stephanus sets forth, in a brief letter to Bielke, the principle of accentuation—eighteen years before Martin Opitz became famous by doing the same in more detail for a larger German audience. Bielke thus introduced what was to become the national trend in Danish versification, while the antique trend was followed by only one of the authors represented, Bertel Knudsen Aqvilonius.

The two most important works included in this volume are Peder Jensen Roskilde's *Prosodia Danicae Linguae*, 1627 (pp. [13]–131) and Hans Mikkelsen Ravn's *Ex Rhythmologia Danica*, 1649 (pp. [147]–325). Peder Jensen was, as the editors remark, an outstanding systematizer, while Mikkelsen Ravn, who built on Peder Jensen's theories, was less doctrinaire and showed greater intellectual fertility.

In all, seven authors are represented in the volume—with a total of nine contributions. Of these, all but two (by Peder Syv and Henrich Gerner) were originally written in Latin, with examples chiefly in Danish, and are reproduced both in Latin and in Danish translation, arranged in parallel columns.

Danske Metrikere bears all the earmarks of having been edited with scholarly competence and exactitude. Published in an edition of only 750 copies, it will obviously be of concern chiefly to a limited number of specialists, who, however, will doubtless consider it a basic work in its field.

Fehrman, Carl. *Kyrkogårds romantik från Thomas Gray till Carl Michael Bellman. Studier i engelsk och svensk 1700-tals diktning*. With a summary in English. Publications of the New Society of Letters at Lund. Gleerups, Lund, 1954. Pp. 178 (paper bound).

REVIEWED BY WALTER W. GUSTAFSON, *Upsala College*.

In this work the author applies the findings of his comprehensive study of death imagery in world literature, *Diktaren och döden* (Stockholm, 1952. See *SS.*, pp. 156-58, Nov. 1953) to a limited field, the graveyard romanticism of the eighteenth century. The nine chapters are brilliant essays in literary criticism, beautifully written, solidly grounded in scholarship, replete with quotations from various literatures and pertinent illustrations from the life of the time.

According to Fehrman, English graveyard romanticism arose as the result of many influences, such as medieval attitudes to death; the reaction against the charnel house of medieval cemeteries (like that suggested in the graveyard scene in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*); medical opinion on medieval church burial; the rise of puritanism and protestantism; and English interest in parks and nature. The synthesis as well as the culmination of this development is Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard"—a poetic fusion of life and death with all discordant elements resolved by art.

In the book there are fine studies on the genesis of the works of Young, Hervey, Blair, Gray and other members of the graveyard school in England and their extensive and important influence in France and Germany. There is a whole chapter devoted to the influence of this same graveyard school in Sweden through translations (at first from French or German) and other impacts on Swedish literature in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Though the movement originated in England, it soon became a general European cult of melancholy and an international poetic attitude towards death and churchyards—it was sometimes religious in motivation, but often times became aesthetic.

Fehrman's comments on Gray's elegy are of great interest to

all readers, because of the significance of the poem in world literature. The critic points out that Gray has excluded from his poem all the baroque and crude horrors of medieval death imagery. In the choice of many details there is a contrast between the rich interred in the church and the poor buried in the churchyard. On the whole, Gray shows more interest in life than in death. Though five English churchyards have been suggested as possible models for the churchyard of the poem, including that of Stoke Poges, it is likely that this poem does not describe any particular churchyard but is a generalized description derived from many churchyards. The dead who as farmers were close to nature in life, find a similar close communion in death, in trembling hope abiding the resurrection.

The chapter on the death imagery and philosophy of Carl von Linné, the eminent Swedish botanist, has great interest. To him all nature is a chain of life, with the forms changing and being transmitted into each other, and there is never any real death—thus all of creation sings a paean of praise to its Creator.

In the book there are also excellent studies on the death imagery of the Swedish writers, Oxenstjerna and Lidner, much of it suggested by the graveyard school.

A fine essay analyzes the death imagery of Carl Michael Bellman, the great Swedish lyricist, pointing out among many other things that he has two main types of death imagery, one medieval, baroque, violent, irreverent; another resigned, poetic, reverent, like that of Gray's elegy.

The summary in English of the nine chapters in nine sections appended to the book enhances considerably the value of the work. Though awkwardly written and often unidiomatic in expression, these résumés convey the main points of the book to the English reader and make its findings available to a larger circle of readers. Even to a reader able to read the original Swedish, it is useful to have at hand a concise outline of the main points. This new plan of using English at least partially in Swedish works of general interest and especially in Swedish works in the field of English or comparative literature is well worth developing at a university, such as Lund, which traditionally in the past has emphasized the study of English literature.

Jacobsson, Nils. *Bland Svenskamerikaner och Gustavianer*. Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, Stockholm, 1953. Pp. 328, incl. 9 pp. bibliography. Price, 14:50 crowns (paper bound).

REVIEWED BY NILS G. SAHLIN,
The American Swedish Historical Foundation.

Posthumously *Lektor* Jacobsson has added an excellent volume to his several studies related to our early Swedish Americana. The title is somewhat misleading, for aside from some background material the book deals rather exclusively with the life and experiences of *Överhovpredikanten* Carl Magnus Wrangel and is, in fact, his biography.

In numerous respects the Reverend Wrangel was an unusual man with an unusual career. A man of great ability and much courage, he frequently became a rather controversial figure, especially in connection with his work in the former New Sweden region, where he was provost for nearly ten years, 1759-1768.

The Wrangel family had up to Carl Magnus' time been predominantly military. Partly because of inclination toward studies, partly because of his being none too robust, he was its first member to enter the ministry. In his day it was in itself a remarkable event that a nobleman became a clergyman. After receiving his master's degree in Greifswald and his doctorate in Göttingen, thus shortening the lengthy preparation demanded in Sweden, he made rapid enough advancement to excite the envy of his colleagues and charges of "noble privileges." He did stand in well at court, having been a decided royalist during the "Era of Liberty," which in part explains his becoming *hovpredikant* at the age of thirty. It is no wonder it was thought "peculiar" that a court chaplain, and a noble court chaplain at that, should soon thereafter be appointed a "missionary" to the Delaware Valley and be placed in charge as provost of the "Swedish American Ministerium."

His years in America are of course the period of greatest interest to us. In many ways *Lektor* Jacobsson's account is an eye-opener and provides immensely interesting reading whether one is interested in religion *per se* or not. The difficulties that Wrangel had to face are almost incredible. To the physical strain

of primitive living conditions, arduous travel on horseback, a number of weekly services in widely scattered localities, and so on, were added the personality problems. When Wrangel arrived, the spiritual state of the region was in sad decline. His fellow ministers from Sweden resented the authority of the newcomer and did their best to discredit him both in his parishes and with his superiors in Sweden. His colleagues included such characters as *Pastor* Lidenius—born in America, but educated in Uppsala—who became fond of women and liquor, ending up in debtor's prison in Salem. Lidenius was set free when his parishioners paid his debts, but the Swedish authorities later unfrocked him. Another *ämbetsbroder* who engaged in dubious financial dealings and intrigues was *Kyrkoherde* Unander in Kristina (Wilmington, Del.) Parish. He was recalled, but the parishioners and Dr. Wrangel had to dislodge him, and the congregation paid his fare to Sweden. Black sheep in the ministry were apparently not uncommon, for still another was a *Pastor* Nordenlind whose private life led to "*obollig skada för vår arma mission.*" He, too, was recalled, but died in tragic circumstances before he could return. The worst thorn in Dr. Wrangel's flesh, however, was the adulterous *Kyrkoherde* Borell, who through his defamation of Wrangel actually obtained appointment from the Swedish authorities as the latter's successor. The parishes refused to accept him as provost, however, and kind Providence furnished its own solution when Borell died.

In all these tribulations the constant friend and comforter of Wrangel was the German Pastor Heinrich Mühlenberg, organizer and patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America. The collaboration between these two is by far the most inspiring part of the book, for it is an early example of complete tolerance between two nationality groups. While Mühlenberg could not preach in Swedish, Wrangel held forth effectively in Swedish, English, and German, and both frequently took turns at holding services in various churches, Swedish and German. Both were deeply concerned about the education of children and did a great deal to establish fairly adequate schools in their parishes. *Lektor* Jacobsson recounts their common labors in great detail.

A curious chapter on Wrangel's conversion of a condemned

Negro murderer in Philadelphia lends further proof of the deep humanity and unconquerable faith this Swedish clergyman brought to his ministry. A similar experience later awaited Wrangel in Sweden.

After virtually defying his recall by the church authorities in Sweden for three and a half years, Wrangel finally concluded his American labors in September, 1768. His successor in Wicaco Parish was from time to time mentally unbalanced. Despite Wrangel's efforts over nearly a decade, the future of his beloved churches looked uncertain, and he must have left with a heavy heart.

The voyage from New Castle, Delaware, to Bristol, England, took "only" five weeks, while the journey to America had required twenty! On his return to Sweden Wrangel was subjected to lengthy hearings by the consistory. He had to answer all the allegations made by his various and sundry rivals and enemies in America. Reprimanded but cleared, he was granted a "pension," including retroactively his last three and a half years in America without salary!

In 1772 Wrangel was appointed *kyrkoherde* in Sala. Among his later accomplishments is the founding of the *Societas Suecana pro Fide et Christianismo*, commonly known as *Samfundet Pro Fide*. He was not yet fifty-nine years old when he ended his remarkable and fruitful career on June 12, 1786.

A translation of *Lektor Jacobsson's* highly readable book, half of which is devoted to America, would make available to non-Swedish readers and scholars a significant chapter in American Colonial history.

Wittrock, Ulf. *Ellen Keys väg från kristendom till livstro*. Appelbergs Boktryckeri AB., Uppsala, 1953. Pp. 442.

REVIEWED BY A. B. BENSON, *Yale University*.

This is a work on a subject that has more vital interest to most human beings than any other in the universe. It deals with faith, and what is more, a woman's faith. Orthodox people may be shocked by the very title of the book, which can be translated literally by the very title of the volume as "Ellen Key's Road

from Christianity to Faith in Life," *this* life, where God is freedom, independence, nature, power, energy, and the highest form of evolutionary development. It is man's most momentous problem that is discussed in Wittrock's investigation, a doctoral dissertation of unusually formidable proportions and substance. For the benefit of scholars it may be added that, mechanically, the thesis contains 366 pages of large octavo text and 74 of notes, bibliography, and index. It is an extremely impressive book, both internally and externally, and even though very clear—insofar as philosophies can be clear—it will take a week to read it through thoughtfully.

And what a wealth of philosophies—social, literary, and religious—which have converged in the active, sensitive mind of Ellen Key! Some of these she rejected; many she absorbed or accepted either wholly or in part, but she always remained an individualist, following no other thinker blindly. She read omniverously—C.J.L. Almqvist, for example, and Viktor Rydberg, Björnstjerne Björnson, George Brandes, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, C. J. Boström, George Sand, George Eliot, R. W. Emerson, Theodore Parker, Ibsen, Strindberg, Goethe, and Spinoza. She knew well the "isms" that permeated the liberal or radical atmosphere about her in her day—atheism, agnosticism, naturalism, Darwinism, Boströmianism, pantheism and positivism, all focused, as we understand it, in individualism. If you cared for salvation you would find it, according to Ellen Key, within yourself and not in the bloody, suffering redemption plans of Jesus. She passed through many agonizing periods: *läsariet*; orthodox Lutheran worship with the Catechism and sacraments; the gradual rejection of the Christian dogmas and the acceptance of a high form of morality; occasional recurrence of periods of doubt and despair, but eventually attaining that *livstro* indicated in the title of Wittrock's work. Throughout she was incredibly serious and sincere; she could be no hypocrite. Her god was her own god, based on the respected faiths of several religions and systems of thought, and on proven scientific development. Apparently her faith could accept no personal god or immortality, as we understand the concept. Highly cultured and intelligent, and a frantic searcher for truth, she could

not honestly accept the ordinary religious fare served from the altars and pulpits of the churches.

To illustrate the contents of this unique and scholarly monograph all we really need to do is to name the headings of a few chapters: I. *Den religiösa liberalism och Emil Key* (Ellen's father, who was a liberalist); III. *Förnuft och känsla, tanke och tro*; IV. *Ellen Key och Björnson*; V. *Ellen Key och boströmianism*; VI. *Positivism och darwinism*; VIII. *Den antikristna omvändelsen*; IX. *Ellen Key och åttiotalsradicalism*; XI. *Monism och livstro*.

Besides, a tenth chapter deals with Ellen's intensive, heaven-storming love for the famous writer and critic Urban von Feilitzen, a married man with a lovely wife and four children. Ellen had taken the initiative, and her love was to an almost tragic degree reciprocated by von Feilitzen, whose wife was physically more attractive than Ellen but less so intellectually. The relation lasted for ten years or more and was known by many prominent friends, including, later, Fru von Feilitzen. But the relationship seems to have remained a platonic one and finally ended after many periods of abysmal despair on both sides and, especially on her part, buckets of tears. Despite her extraordinary intellect she had remained a strongly sexed woman. Apparently, however, she does not seem to have had affection for anyone but von Feilitzen. It is a tragic tale of fate and separation. Probably through von Feilitzen's slumbering respect for an inherited form of ethics and the prevalent social order, no divorce was ever seriously contemplated, and, believing *him* weak and without courage, with her own passion undoubtedly greater and stronger than his, Ellen never received her coveted satisfaction.

In addition to tracing the life and mental development of Ellen Key, and especially through Ellen's reading, study, correspondence, and personal contacts with innumerable intellectual celebrities all over northern Europe in particular, Wittrock's work gives really a survey of European thought and influence during her lifetime. And it is amazing how many women writers and thinkers there were at the time. We can here mention, in Ellen's circle, only Anne Charlotte Leffler and Victoria Benediktsson. Kindred minds will find much comfort in this book by Wittrock. It is always satisfying to know that others—some

of them brilliant and all of them painstakingly honest—have had the same disturbing problems of mind or heart as yourself, and have seemingly reached similar conclusions. Ellen Key may not always have been right, but she was always honest, and it is a valuable contribution to have a clear exposition of her religious development. She finally attained a definite faith in life which was satisfactory to her, and *we*, too, should live this life in full measure whether or not we regard it as a preparation for another. Students of Ellen Key would certainly like to see this book translated into English or German.

Nyholm, Jens. *Portal til Amerika*, Borgens Forlag, Copenhagen, 1953. Pp. 78.

REVIEWED BY SOPHUS WINTHER, *University of Washington*.

Jens Nyholm's *Portal til Amerika* is a mixture of imaginative poetry and imitative verse. In the poems intended to reveal the young Danish poet's reaction to America, and especially to New York, there is affectation of language, pseudo-modernism in form, and conventional images. He seems to be strongly influenced by Carl Sandburg's "Chicago Poems," following the manner but somehow missing the poetic image. His effort at identification seems forced:

Jeg er New York, den store behersker.

Jeg er en tiger pa spring, og alverden er mit bytte.

Jeg er New York. Mit indre bruser.

Jeg er fattigdommen og ghettoen.

He dwells on the loneliness, wonder, vastness and complexity of the new world as he meets it in New York. The effect is descriptive, interesting, but without much feeling. Perhaps this is due to his unwillingness or inability to abandon himself to the new world. He is conscious of his aloofness, even treats it in a humorous vein. Denmark holds him chained to the past:

Jeg drog til et fremmed land,
men som en snegl ikke løber bort fra sit hus
skiltes jeg aldrig fra Danmark.

His American girl friend rebukes him for his inability to escape from the old country:

"Du er en sød dreng,"
sagde Evelyn,
"men Du snakker for meget om Danmark.
Altid stirrer Du tilbage."

When the poet leaves New York for the smaller seacoast cities, and after that for the midland plains, he loses his self-conscious pose and writes with feeling. It is in the later poems of this little volume that one feels the power of imagination, the fluidity of language and the sincerity of mood that indicate the quality of a poet:

Det var ude på Kansas' sletter,
det var ude på Kansas' bibelske prærier
jeg blev Elias
og fo'r til himmels
i min ildvogn.

In spite of its limitations, this volume of poetry gives a total effect of pleasure. Perhaps the next volume will be better when the poet digs down beneath the surface he has now cleared for cultivation.



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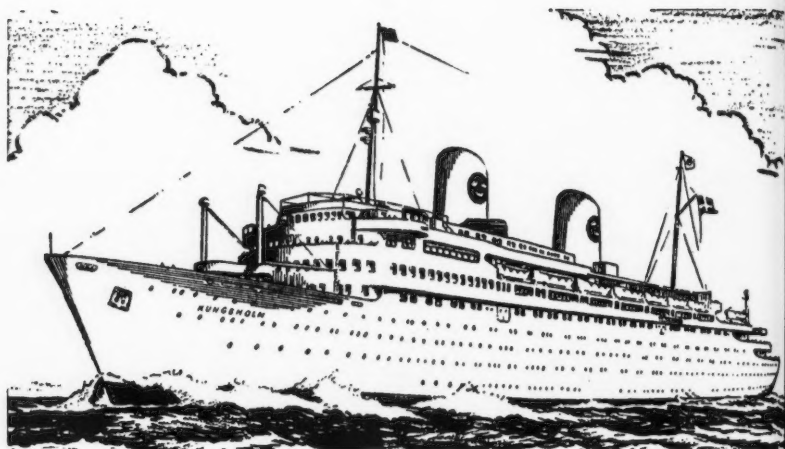
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